**Wednesday March 3, 2010**

Our son, Blake, over the course of the last few months has been showing signs my husband and I are worried about very much, so I decided to keep this diary to keep track of my thoughts during this time. He just hasn’t been acting the same as he did before, and he is not acting the same as all of his other 3 year old friends and his development seems to be under the normal quota of a 3 year old. I thought at first when I gave him his stuffed animal bear around a year ago that it was something he just became fond of and something that comforted him. The fact that Blake cannot go anywhere without the bear and does not every put it down has frightened me greatly. He is having a very tough time holding utensils in his hand to eat and gets frustrated very easily. After trying twice to hold it he will give up and throw a temper tantrum. All I want is for my child to be the same as everyone else’s! Why is this happening to me? Why can’t he be able to live life like everyone else? My husband and I have decided to take him to the doctor tomorrow to take him through some tests to possibly see what the disability is in my child. I have a feeling from doing research on the topic by using websites such as webmd.com and autismspeaks.com that he will be diagnosed with autism. I am so nervous and will be praying all night tonight in hopes that it may just be slow development and not autism. However if it is autism, I will want to do whatever I can to help Blake deal with it and get the most of life. That is all a parent can is for.

**Thursday March 4, 2010 9 A.M.**

Today may have been one of the most memorable and petrifying days of my life. Our doctor, Dr. Sanchez, came into the room today and told us the tests the Blake was going to be going through in order to find a diagnosis on him. The first test they would start with was a verbal test to see how he communicates with others.Next he told us he wanted to observe Blake playing for about 30 minutes to see how he does with this. Lastly, he would like us to fill out something called a CAST (Childhood Autism Spectrum Test) which is a series of yes or no questions that could possibly show a diagnosis of autism in our son. Dr. Sanchez also informs us that this will take a team of multidisciplinary doctors to run all of these tests. We can only hope for the best at this point.3

**Thursday March 4, 2010 1 P.M.** After the many tests and extensive time spent on Blake, our doctor has no doubt in his mind that our son has a mild form of autism. As a parent, you cannot prepare yourself for a moment like this to find out that your child is suffering from something, and there is nothing you can ever do to complete cure it. My husband and I bawled the whole way home, and realized Blake did not know why this was happening and what this life changing news was going to mean for him.

The first doctor who analyzed his communication skills noticed something very quickly. Blake had trouble saying any words and would just point to things instead of saying what the object was.

The next doctor that watched him play noticed that would get fixated on an object. The doctor would give him a stuffed animal and the moment the doctor tried to take it away, Blake would keep asking for it back until he finally received it back. He also would avoid the blocks and chalkboard to write because Blake knows those things will frustrate him and something he wasn’t good at. The doctors also brought in a group of other kids to play with him to see how he would react playing with them. During the whole 45 minutes of them playing with each other, Blake did not say one word to them. The yes or no answers on the CAST easily showed us that autism was something that our son definitely had. After the tests, the doctor told of us of some things as parents we should sign him up for to help him through this and to help him get the most out of his life.

The first thing we should do is get Blake an occupational therapist to help him with his fine motor skills and develop those more thoroughly. Next we should get him a speech therapist to help with him the speech problems he is having because that may be a big reason that Blake won’t talk. He is afraid the words won’t come out right. He would also like us to send him to a special preschool that helps children with autism so he can get more attention rather than going to a regular preschool.

The last thing Dr. Sanchez recommended was for us to get an Ipad when they come out because he has heard of apps that they created that can help children with autism cognitively.5 I am so happy and thankful for all the doctors have done for us and I know they will be there. All of their great advice is going to help tremendously! Blake is going to be just fine!! I am so happy to know this as a parent and so is my husband!